

Message Text

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ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 PA-01
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FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7783
USICA WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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AMEMBASSY SOFIA
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STATE FOR INR

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN, PEPR, US, GE
SUBJECT: GDR MEDIA TREATMENT - SOVIET TRIALS

REF: STATE 178559

1. TRIALS OF SOVIET DISSIDENTS RECEIVED FAIRLY
EXTENSIVE TREATMENT IN GDR PRESS, WITH STORIES APPEAR-
ING DAILY IN OFFICIAL SED ORGAN NEUES DEUTSCHLAND AND
OTHER DAILIES DURING THE TRIALS. NEUES DEUTSCHLAND OF
JULY 11 HAS THREE SEPARATE ARTICLES ON PAGE TWO REPORT-
ING OPENINGS OF COURT PROCEEDINGS AGAINST GINSBURG,
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SHCHARANSKY, AND ANATOLI FILATOV;
ARTICLES HEADLINED, RESPECTIVELY, "LEGAL PROCESS IN
KALUGA," "NATIONAL BETRAYER ON TRIAL," AND "SPY ON
TRIAL." ALL ATTRIBUTED TO GDR NEWS AGENCY ADN, BUT
CITE TASS AS SOURCE OF INFORMATION. ON SAME PAGE UNDER
HEADLINE "TASS AGAINST WESTERN INTERFERENCE" IS REPRINT
OF TASS COMMENTARY STATING THAT ACTIONS ARE MATTER FOR

SOVIET COURTS ALONE TO DECIDE. ALL ARTICLES PREDICTABLY FOLLOW SOVIET LINE, OFFERING AS ESTABLISHED FACTS THE DETAILS OF ALLEDGED "CRIMES" FOR WHICH DEFENDENTS CHARGED. GINSBURG ARTICLE INCLUDES EXTENSIVE PERSONAL ATTACK: "HE LED AN AMORAL LIFE AND DEVELOPED ALCOHOLISM. WITH HIS FOREIGN-SUPPLIED MEANS HE ACQUIRED AN APARTMENT HOUSE IN MOSCOW AND A COUNTRY HOUSE. FURTHER, HE PURCHASED STOLEN ICONS. WITH THE SAME MEANS HE DEFRAYED THE COST OF SUPPORTING HIS FAMILY. THROUGHOUT, HE SYSTEMATICALLY EVADED TAXES."

2. ARTICLE ON TRIALS IN JULY 12 NEUES DEUTSCHLAND PAGE 2 CARRY ON IN SIMILAR VEIN. IN ALL THREE PIECES, ALL ALLEGATIONS ARE REPORTED AS IF THEIR TRUTH NOT IN DOUBT. COVERAGE IN JULY 13 NEUES DEUTSCHLAND SOMEWHAT DIMINISHED. NO REPORT ON GINSBURG CASE; SHCHARANSKY PROCESS BRIEFLY REPORTED ON PAGE 2. BELOW SHCHARANSKY PIECE IS ARTICLE ON FILATOV HEADLINED "SPY ASSIGNMENTS RECEIVED BY RADIO FROM ABROAD; ACCUSED FILATOV SPEAKS FURTHER ABOUT HIS SECRET CONTACTS." FILATOV PIECE GOES ON TO REPORT DEFENDENT'S CONFESSION BEFORE MOSCOW MILITARY COURT OF HIS INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITY FOR A "FOREIGN SECRET SERVICE."

3. JULY 14 NEUES DEUTSCHLAND PAGE 2 HAS STORY ON ALL THREE TRIALS. GINSBURG PIECE IS HEADLINED "SENTENCED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOR UNFRIENDLY ACTS AGAINST THE USSR; DISTRICT COURT IN KALUGA DECIDES EIGHT YEARS IMPRISONMENT FOR GINSBURG. STORY STATES THAT "ANTI-SOVIET ELEMENTS" WITH WHOM GINSBURG CONSPIRED INCLUDE "HELPERS OF THE GERMAN FASCISTS WHO IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR PARTICIPATED IN EXECUTING SOVIET CITIZENS." SHCHARANSKY STORY HEADLINED "MANY INSTANCES OF ESPIONAGE CONFIRMED; SHCHARANSKY FOUND GUILTY ON ALL COUNTS OF CHARGES," WHILE FILATOV REPORT HEADLINED "PROCESS CONTINUES; TAKING OF FURTHER TESTIMONY IN ACTIONS AGAINST FILATOV." NEUES DEUTSCHLAND COVERAGE DOES NOT MENTION INCIDENTS WITH RELATIVES OF ACCUSED WHICH ATTRACTED ATTENTION OF WESTERN PRESS.

4. WEEKEND EDITION OF NEUES DEUTSCHLAND PAGE 2 REPORTS SHCHARANSKY SENTENCE IN ARTICLE "NATIONAL BETRAYER PUNISHED; ACCUSED SHCHARANSKY SENTENCED TO 13 YEARS IMPRISONMENT." FILATOV TRIAL RESULTS ANNOUNCED UNDER HEADLINE "DEATH SENTENCE FOR HIGH TREASON; SENTENCE ANNOUNCED IN LEGAL ACTION AGAINST FILATOV." AS IN PREVIOUS COVERAGE, ARTICLES ATTRIBUTED TO ADN BUT CITE TASS AS SOURCE OF ALL INFORMATION. NO FURTHER COVERAGE

IN NEUES DEUTSCHLAND ON MONDAY JULY 17.

5. EXTENSIVE GDR COVERAGE OF SOVIET TRIALS NOT SURPRISING
SINCE THEY WERE REPORTED EXTENSIVELY IN WEST GERMAN MEDIA
AND GDR AUTHORITIES PROBABLY FELT COMPELLED TO OFFER
THE PUBLIC THEIR OWN VERSION OF EVENTS. REPORTS OF
FILATOV "CONFESSION" LIKELY INTENDED TO LEND CREDIBILITY
TO CHARGES THAT GINSBURG, SHCHARANSKY SIMILARLY GUILTY
OF ANTI-STATE ACTIVITIES, EVEN THOUGH THEY DENIED SUCH
CHARGES. PROMINENT COVERAGE GIVEN TO SOVIET TRIALS

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USICA WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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PERHAPS ALSO INTENDED TO REMIND EAST GERMANS OF LIMITS
OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN COMMUNIST STATES AND TO PUT THE
GDR'S OWN RECENT TRIALS (HUEBNER AND BAHRO; SEE
BERLIN 4408 AND 4508) INTO A BROADER PERSPECTIVE AND TO
ASSOCIATE THE GDR WITH SOVIET ACTIONS. BOLEN

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